

REMARKS

Claims 1, 9, 11, 19 and 20 are amended. Claims 1-9 and 11-30 are in the application for consideration.

The independent claims are amended to emphasize that the contact plug comprises a second conductive material and as well a distinct conductive layer which is disposed along the lateral sidewall along the second conductive material, with the second conductive material and conductive layer comprising a part of the contact plug. Such is inherent from Applicant's previously accepted Fig. 6 and the amendments pertaining thereto, and Applicant's specification as-filed at p.13, lns.12-17.

The independent claims are also amended to recite that the second conductive material physically contacts the semiconductive material layer. Such is also supported by Applicant's previously accepted Fig. 6, wherein second material 58 contacts material 12, and as supported by Applicant's specification as-filed at p.13, ln.14, with respect to the accepted dictionary definition of "clad". Accordingly, no new matter is added by the newly submitted amendments.

The independent claims stand rejected over various combinations of Bronner et al., Lee et al., Lai et al. and Ahmad et al. However, in each of said references, particularly where the combination of an alleged equivalent to Applicant's claim-recited "second conductive material" and "conductive layer" as part of a contact plug is asserted by the Examiner, the stated "second conductive material" does not physically contact the underlying semiconductive material layer. Rather, such is spaced therefrom by the "conductive layer". See, for

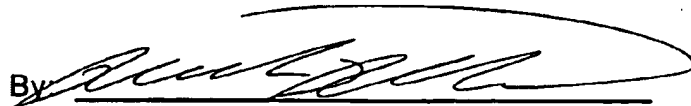
example, Lai et al. where material 20 does not physically contact drain 10, but is spaced therefrom by layer 19. The same applies with respect to Fig. 22 of Lee et al. where material 90 does not physically contact diffusion region 30, but rather is spaced therefrom by layer 85. Ahmad et al. and Bronner et al. do not utilize Applicant's claim recited "conductive layer", and applying the teachings of Bronner et al. and/Ahmad et al. to either of the teachings of Lee et al. and/Lai et al. only reasonably teaches a person of skill in the art to space Applicant's claim-recited "second conductive material" from the semiconductive material layer, and thereby teaches away from physically contacting the "second conductive material" with the semiconductive material layer.

As each of the references is lacking in these regards as asserted above, it is inconceivable that the combination could suggest that which Applicant now recites in its independent claims. Further for reasons argued above, any combination of the subject references actually teaches away from that which Applicant now recites. Accordingly, the claims as amended herein are seen to be allowable, and action to that end is requested.

This application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance, and action to that end is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
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